

"MERCURY" MAKES GOOD

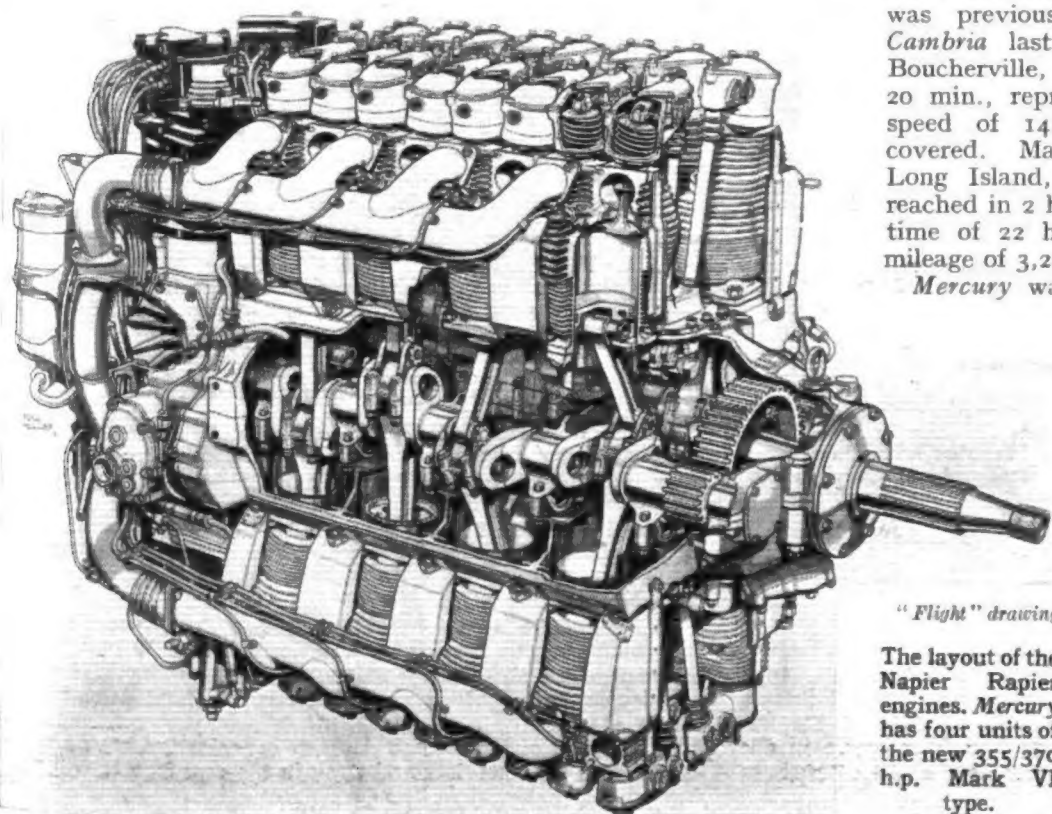
Upper Component's Crossing in Record Time Gives Mayo-Composite Scheme its First Commercial Vindication

WITH *Mercury's* record-breaking flight from Foynes Harbour, Ireland, to Montreal and New York, Imperial Airways, in conjunction with the Air Ministry (not forgetting the makers of the machine and engines), have achieved a second and most interesting step towards making transatlantic aviation a commercial proposition.

Mercury, Rapier-engined upper component of the Short-Mayo composite aircraft, was launched at normal all-up weight of 20,800 lb., including 600 lb. of freight—newsreels, Press photographs, and so forth. The separation from *Maia* was accomplished at 19.58 hours on Thursday, July 21. By passing over Cape Bauld, Newfoundland, 13 hr. 29 min. later, *Mercury* had made the fastest East-West Atlantic crossing on record (the best time was previously made by the Short boat *Cambria* last August, in 14 hr. 24 min.). Boucherville, Montreal, was reached in 20 hr. 20 min., representing an average "ground" speed of 141 m.p.h. for the 2,860 miles covered. Manhasset Bay, Port Washington, Long Island, was the next stop, and was reached in 2 hr. 11 min., making a total flying time of 22 hr. 31 min. for an approximate mileage of 3,240.

Mercury was piloted by Captain D. C. T. Bennett, who was accompanied by W/O. A. J. Coster. Capt. Bennett's report is not yet available, but it appears from meteorological data that they encountered an average headwind of approximately 25 m.p.h. Several long stretches were covered against winds considerably in excess of this speed. The flight was made for the most part at altitudes varying between 5,000ft. and 11,000ft.

Interest centres, of course, on the 2,860-mile leg of the flight from Foynes to Boucherville, Montreal. *Mer-*



The layout of the Napier Rapier engines. *Mercury* has four units of the new 355/370 h.p. Mark VI type.